



# News Release

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## **Columbia Aquatic Restoration Project Receives National Award**

COLUMBIA, MO - The Columbia Parks and Recreation Department has received a national award from the American Park and Recreation Society (APRS) for its Columbia Aquatic Restoration Project (CARP). The Department was awarded a \$1,000 check from APRS's grant and scholarship program. According to APRS, "These funds are in recognition of your agency's efforts in connecting citizens and professionals through the Columbia Aquatic Restoration Project."

CARP is a volunteer program designed to support the Parks and Recreation Department in implementing an aquatic plant and shoreline management plan. Parks and Recreation is a partner with the Office of Volunteer Services and the Public Works Stormwater Outreach Program in administration of the program. CARP uses trained volunteers to assist in aquatic park management and maintenance for the growing number of park ponds, streams, retention basins, rain gardens and lakes in the City of Columbia's park system.

Participants attend three educational classes that provide instruction and field training in lake and pond ecology. In return, the participants agree to donate at least 18 hours in assisting the Parks and Recreation Department with aquatic restoration projects. Since the program's inception in 2007, participants have donated 883 hours and completed 11 park aquatic projects.

According to Brett O'Brien, Natural Resources Park Supervisor and the program's originator, the award funds will be used to purchase tools, training materials, and other items in support of the program and its participants.